availability of drinking water is ensured at stations by arranging water through private water tankers. Even water special trains are run in areas facing heavy shortage of water. Water coolers, mobile water trollies, matkas are arranged for better availability of water to the passengers. Many Non-Government Organisations also supplement water supply to passengers. In addition, packaged drinking water/natural mineral water is made available for sale through static as well as mobile catering/vending units.

Reconstruction of outlived rail bridges/culverts

†1409. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it is unsafe to operate trains on a number of such rail bridges/culverts as these have outlived their normal life;

(b) if so, the scheme of Government to reconstruct such bridges/ culverts; and

(c) the number of such rail bridges/culverts which need immediate attention from safety point of view?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The life of the bridge is not based on its age but on physical condition as ascertained by inspections. Railways have a well laid down system of multi-tier annual inspection of bridges. Those bridges which require repair/rehabilitation are taken up on a programmed basis. Bridges requiring immediate attention are taken up on priority and are classified as Distressed Bridges. If required, speed restrictions are imposed till repairs are carried out. Distressed bridges are not unsafe for train operations. There are 122 distressed bridges as on 01-04-2005 out of which 84 are targeted for repair/rehabilitation during the 2005-06.

New catering policy

†1410. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to formulate a New Catering Policy;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the New Catering Policy would be formulated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. New Catering Policy, 2005 has already been formulated which is effective from 16.03.2005.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Establishment of Railway Recruitment Board Office at Bilaspur

1411: SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a proposal from State Government for establishment of Railway Recruitment Board Office at Bilaspur;

(b) if not, whether Government would consider a Railway Recruitment Office at Bilaspur considering strong public demand to cater to the needs of the unemployed and educated youth of the State; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) and (c) Railway Recruitment Board at Bilaspur is not considered justified. There are already nineteen Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) situated all over the country. These RRBs are able to meet the recruitment requirements of the Indian Railways adequately. The RRBs have been established based on territorial jurisdiction of the Indian Railways and not on the basis of State(s), Zones/Regions. In fact, the RRBs freely accept the applications from the candidates all over the country in response to their advertisements and do not make any discrimination on the basis of State, Region or Area. Bilaspur area is catered adequately by RRB/Bhopal. Also, examination centres are arranged in Bhilai, Raipur and Chhattisgarh by RRB/Bhopal, keeping in view the number of candidates belonging to Chhattisgarh State.